

What is *Cossus sareptensis* Rothschild, 1912 (Cossidae)?

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Abstract. A new combination, *Holcocerus sareptensis* (Rothschild, 1912) **comb. n.**, is proposed and a redescription is given for this rare and little-known species of Cossidae from the Volga region in Russia.

Key words. *Cossus sareptensis*, *Holcocerus*, Volga region, Russia.

Presently, Cossidae still remain one of the less studied families of Macroheterocera. For instance, the recently published catalogue of the Lepidoptera of Europe, which included Cossidae (de Freina 1996), missed the little-known *Cossus sareptensis* Rothschild, 1912, considered below.

Cossus sareptensis was described by Rothschild (1912: 451) based on a single male. The type locality was given as “Sarepta” (now Krasnoarmeisk, Volgograd Province, Russia). This species, described within the genus *Cossus* Fabricius, 1793, was mentioned by subsequent authors (Daniel 1956: 278, pl. 10 fig. 3; Zagulyaev 1973: 184; Anikin, Sachkov & Zolotuhin 2000: 275) in the original combination although these authors did not examine the holotype; only F. Daniel had a black-and-white photograph. Through the courtesy of the Trustee Council of The Natural History Museum (British Museum [Natural History]) I was provided with a high quality scan of the holotype, its genitalia slide, and the labels. The exterior, genitalia (the uncus shape, the structure of the transtilla processes, the specific round tubercle on the valva), and the antennal structure (with no pectinate processes on segments) (Daniel 1959) provide evidence that the species belongs in fact to the genus *Holcocerus* Staudinger, 1884 (type species: *Cossus (Holcocerus) nobilis* Staudinger, 1884, by original designation). Therefore, a new combination is proposed. Taking into account the lack of information concerning this species, a redescription is provided.

Holcocerus sareptensis (Rothschild, 1912) **comb. n.**

(Figs. 1–3)

Cossus sareptensis Rothschild, 1912: 451; Daniel, 1956: 278, Taf. X: 3; Zagulyaev, 1973: 184; Anikin, Sachkov & Zolotuhin, 2000: 275.

Material. Holotype P (by monotypy): a well-preserved specimen with the abdomen's distal end cut off and the following labels: (1) handwritten on white paper in a blue box in Indian ink “Srpt.[Sarepta] | Stgr.[Staudinger]”; (2) handwritten on red paper in Indian ink “*Cossus* | *sareptensis* | Type, Rothsch.[ild]”; (3) printed round label with red margin “Type”; (4) typed on blue paper “Cossidae | genitalia slide | No. 239” (The Natural History Museum, London).

Redescription. Wing expanse 31 mm, forewing length 13 mm. Antenna not pectinate, its segments without processes. Forewing upperside ground-color light-brown; pattern lighter in middle and with narrow wavy lines becoming more distinct closer to outer margin; fringe ochre-colored, darker at vein apices. Hindwing upperside grey without pattern; fringe ochre-colored.



Figs. 1–2. Holotype of *Holcocerus sareptensis* (Rothschild, 1912). 1. Specimen. 2. Labels.

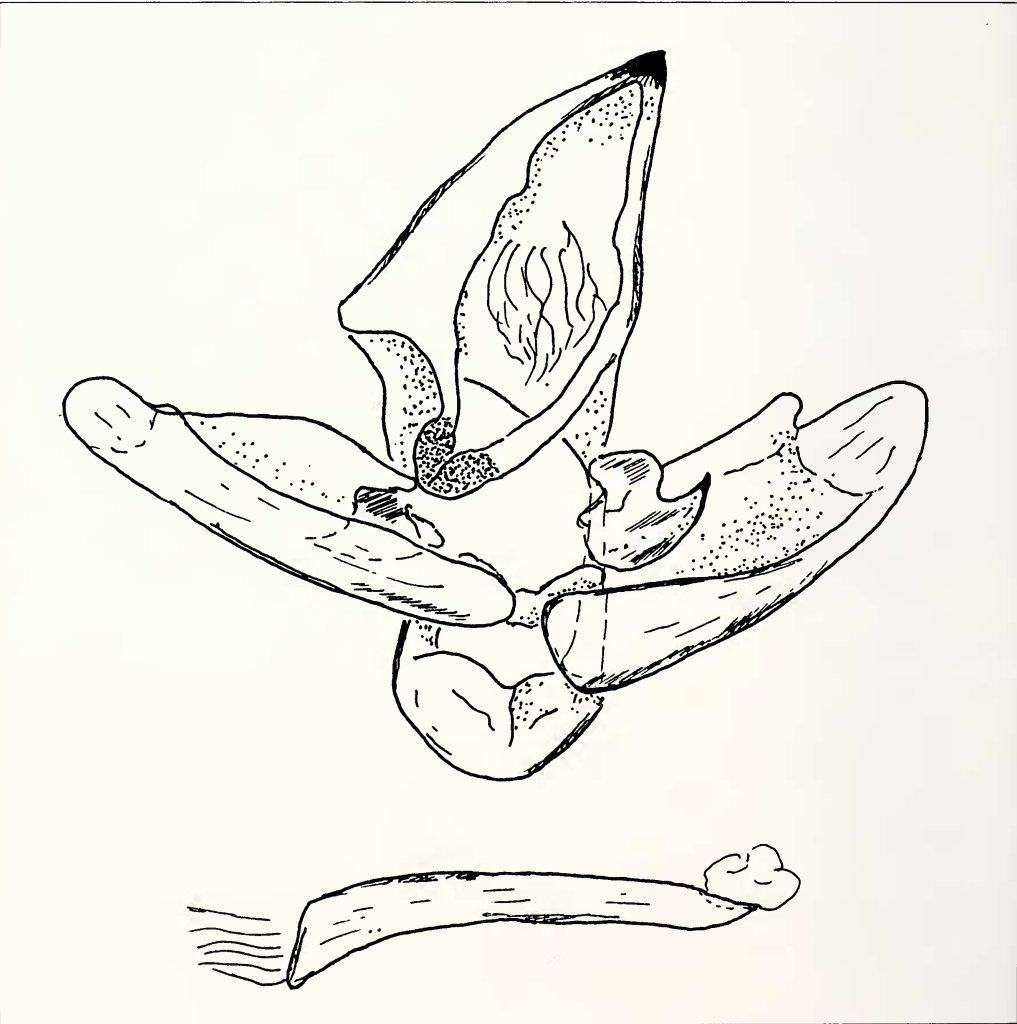


Fig. 3. *Holcocerus sareptensis* (Rothschild, 1912), holotype, genitalia, frontal projection

Male genitalia. Uncus blunt, angular, short, thickly sclerotized at apex. Gnathos arms long. Gnathos blade-like, formed by two merged halves. Valva characteristic of genus *Holcocerus*, sclerotized with membranous apex, wide with a round tubercle on dorsal margin. Arms of transtilla hook-shaped (with curved distal ends) well sclerotized. Saccus round. Aedeagus curved. Vesica without cornuti.

Female. Unknown.

Distribution. Known only from the type locality, Krasnoarmeisk in the Volgograd Province, Russia.

Remarks. This is quite a peculiar species quite well differing from other known representatives of the genus by a reduced wing pattern and a wide uncus. Externally, it is most similar to the Central Asian *Holcocerus campicola* (Eversmann, 1854).

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